

The Rise of Extremism in Pakistan: A Consequence of Foreign Intervention or Domestic Failure

- 1) Introduction
- 2) The Rise of Extremism in Pakistan is the consequence of domestic failures (Thesis)

i) Use of religion for political purposes
(Islamization Policy by Zia-ul-Haq)

ii) Alienation of people from government policies leads to Extremism
(Alienation of the people of Balochistan by government)

iii) Neglect of human development breeds extremism

(Human Development Index Report)

- (iv) Weaponization of Blasphemy law
(Mashal Khan case)
- v) Failure of Judicial system to solve disputes increases extremist tendencies
(Rule of Law Index)
- vi) Failure to reform Madrassah Education
(National Security Commission Report).
- vii) Extremist speeches from the pulpit radicalize people
(case study of Pakistan and Egypt).
- viii) Failure of law enforcement agencies to maintain rule of law leads to mob justice

(Human right
Watch Report).

3 The Rise of Extremism in Pakistan is the Consequence of Foreign Intervention (Counter Argument):

- (i) Pakistan Participation
in Afghan Jihad
increased extremism
(Pakistan Beyond
the Crisis State
Reference).
- (ii) India support
of insurgents in
Pakistan has
resulted in extremism
(Kalbushan Jadhav
Testimony).
- (iii) Foreign funding
of madrasah to
fuel extremism
in Pakistan
(Iran and Saudi
Arabia funding
to Madrasahs)

4- Extremism in Pakistan is the result of domestic failures rather than foreign Intervention (Synthesis):

(i) People's alienation from the government is the major cause of extremism than foreign intervention.

(ii) Government failure to regulate madrasah is the sole cause of the rise of extremism than foreign funding.

5- Conclusion

Essay

Benazir Bhutto, the First female Prime Minister of Pakistan, said on one occasion, "Extremism can only flourish in an environment where government failed to provide the basic facilities to its people."

It validates the claim that extremism is the direct corollary of the government inefficiency.

The rise of extremism in Pakistan is the consequence of domestic failures rather than foreign intervention. The rise of extremism is fueled by the use of Religion for political purposes. In addition, the alienation of people from government policies results in the rise of extremism. Furthermore,

the poor human development indicators lay the ground work for extremism in Pakistan. Besides, the weaponization of blasphemy law is equally responsible for the rise of extremism. Moreover, the failure of judicial system to dispense off speedy justice and security enforcement agencies to maintain the rule of law are responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan. However, some people believe that foreign intervention like proxy war and funding to madrassahs is responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan. The reality is that the government policies and domestic failures are more responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan. Thus, the rise of extremism in Pakistan

is more because of domestic failures, use of religion for political purposes and failure to regulate Madrassahs, rather than foreign intervention.

The use of religion for political purposes is the major cause of rise of extremism in Pakistan.

The successive government in Pakistan has used religion for narrative building and to strengthen their stay in power.

Farzana Sheikh in her book, "Making Sense of Pakistan" has proved the fact that Zia proposed Islamization policies, Zakat Ordinance and Hudud Ordinance, to gain popular support for his government. His policies increased extremism in Pakistan. Hence proved, the use of religion for strengthening the rule of

politicians has increased extremism in Pakistan.

In addition, the alienation of people from the policies of government leads to the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

The government takes some measures, which is not in the best interest of people, which fuel resentment in masses.

For instance, People of Balochistan are alienated from the government due to the failure of government to provide basic facilities like health, education, infrastructure and royalty in the mineral resources.

The aggrieved people resolve to extremist measures.

Thus, the grievances of people from government lead to the rise of extremism.

Besides, the neglect of human development breeds extremism in Pakistan.

Government prioritize the developmental projects rather than investment in the health and education of people.

As a result, unemployed people are compelled to join militant and extremist organizations to meet their basic needs. According to the Human Development Index Report, "Pakistan ranks 168 out of 193 countries in human development index due to poor health, education and livelihood.

People have no other option but to resort to extremism. In short, the poor human development indicators are responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

Moreover, the weaponization of blasphemy law has



further increased extremism in Pakistan. People use the pretext of blasphemy to lynch ^{innocent} people and settle personal scores with them. People take law in their own hand rather than let security forces to investigate the case. **Mashal Khan, A University student, was lynched by mob due to false accusations of blasphemy.** It set a bad precedent and led to increased cases of lynching in the coming years. Hence, weaponization of blasphemy law has led to the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

Similarly, the failure of judicial system to solve disputes increases extremist tendencies. The judicial system of Pakistan

is plagued with thousands of pending cases. As a result, the failure of judicial system to timely solve the cases compels people to take law in their hand. People raise arms to solve their disputes. According to the Rule of Law Index, "Pakistan ranks 130 out of 142 countries".

It highlights, the inefficiencies of Judicial system of Pakistan. Hence, weakness of Judicial system of Pakistan to timely resolve cases leads to the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

In addition, failure of the government to reform Madrassah education increased extremism in Pakistan. The curriculum of Madrassah is based on strict interpretation of Islam with little focus

on modern education.

As a result, the graduates from these religious institutions are intolerant towards others.

According to the National Security Commission Report, the parallel education system of Pakistan, Private School, Government Schools and Madrassahs, is the cause of extremism in Pakistan.

Hence proved, the failure of government to modernize and reform madrassah education system leads to the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the unregulated extremist speeches from the pulpit radicalize people. The religious scholars stir extremist tendencies in people by giving furious speeches against all

people who do not subscribe to their interpretation of Islam.

This leads to violent clashes among different communities as the government has failed to regulate these sermons. To illustrate,

Pakistan's authorities have failed to regulate Friday sermons; it fuels extremism in Pakistan.

Unlike Pakistan, the government of Egypt regulate sermons to reduce extremism in society.

Thus, radical speeches from the pulpit of mosques fuel extremism in Pakistan.

Lastly, failure of law enforcement agencies to maintain rule of law leads to mob justice. When people have no trust in the law enforcement institutions,

they tend to mob justice and extremist measures. According to the Human Right Watch report, "The attack of a mob on the christian settlements, highlights the inefficiency of security agencies in Pakistan." Hence proved, failure of security agencies to maintain the rule of law lead to mob justice and extremism.

The above paragraphs explained the reasons of domestic failures for the rise of extremism in Pakistan. The following paragraphs will explain the point that foreign interventions are responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

Firstly, the participation of Pakistan in Afghan Jihad

led to the rise of
extremism in Pakistan.

Pakistan, with the help
of the US and Saudi Arabia
funding, trained Mujahidden
in Madrassas to take
part in the Afghan
Jihad. These measures
led to the rise of
extremism in Pakistan.

Maleeha Lodhi in
her book, "Pakistan Beyond
the Crisis State" reiterated
the fact that the decision
of Zia-ul-Haq to join
Afghan Jihad and to
train Mujahidden increased
extremism in Pakistan.

In short, the decision
of the government of Pakistan
to join Afghan Jihad laid
the groundwork for extremism
in Pakistan.

In addition, the
role of India to support
insurgents in Pakistan has
resulted in extremism.

India provides finances and trainings to extremist groups to destabilize Pakistan. To illustrate, Kalbusham Jadhav, an Indian spy caught by Pakistani Security Forces, has told in his testimony that India is funding BLA to cause extremism and terrorism in Pakistan. Hence proved, India is supporting proxy war inside Pakistan which has resulted in extremism in Pakistan.

Lastly, foreign countries are funding different Madrassahs to fuel extremism in Pakistan. Countries fund Madrassahs to propagate their version of Islam. It creates polarization and increases extremism in Pakistan. To illustrate, During 1970s, Both Iran and Saudi

Arabia provided funds to different Madrassahs to propagate Sunni and Shia Islam. It resulted in Shia-Sunni conflicts and extremism in Pakistan. Thus, the funding of Madrassahs by foreign countries led to the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

The above paragraphs explained foreign interventions as the reasons of the rise of extremism in Pakistan. In the following paragraphs, its counter arguments will be given.

Firstly, People alienation from the government is the major cause of extremism rather than foreign intervention. Foreign intervention can never get successful until people harbour some grievances

against government. Thus, it is a domestic failure rather than foreign intervention which is responsible for the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

Secondly, the government failure to regulate madrassahs is the cause of rise of extremism rather than of funding. If government regulates madrassah education and funding sources, foreign funding will never get successful to fuel extremism in Pakistan. Thus, government inability to regulate madrassahs is more responsible for the rise of extremism than foreign funding.

In a nutshell, extremism is rising in Pakistan with each passing day. The domestic failures are responsible for the rise

of extremism in Pakistan.

These include government use of religion for vested interests. Moreover, alienation

of public, poor human development indicators and failure of state institutions

are responsible for the increasing extremism in

Pakistan. However, some

people believe that foreign intervention like

Afghan Jihad, proxy war by India and foreign

funding to Madrassahs

are responsible for the

rise of extremism in

Pakistan. The fact is

that the domestic failures

are more responsible than the

foreign factors involved

in extremism in Pakistan.